

**DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
MUNICIPAL REGULATIONS**

**TITLE 18. VEHICLES AND TRAFFIC
CHAPTER 12. BICYCLES, MOTORIZED BICYCLES, AND MISCELLANEOUS
VEHICLES**

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1200 BICYCLES AND MOTORIZED BICYCLES: GENERAL PROVISIONS

- 1200.1 This chapter shall apply to all bicycles operated upon all public space in the District of Columbia.
- 1200.2 No person may own or operate a bicycle in the District except in accordance with the provisions of this chapter.
- 1200.3 Operators of bicycles have the same rights as do operators of other vehicles and in the additional rights granted by this chapter.
- 1200.4 No operator's permit shall be required for the operation of a bicycle.
- 1200.5 No person shall be subject to the loss or suspension of his or her motor vehicle operator's permit for violation of any regulation under this chapter.
- 1200.6 No points shall accrue toward the loss of or suspension of a motor vehicle operator's permit by reason of a violation committed while operating a bicycle or sidewalk bicycle.
- 1200.7 Each bicycle operated in the District shall be registered as provided by this chapter within fourteen (14) days of its acquisition or of its being brought into the District; Provided, that a non-resident owner who has registered his or her bicycle for the current registration period under the laws of another jurisdiction is exempt from this provision.
- 1200.8 No person, except for impoundment by the Mayor, shall tamper with any bicycle which has been locked, placed in a rack, or otherwise secured. [MISDEMEANOR: See §1110]

- 1200.9 No person shall remove from a place of storage, possess, convey, transfer, buy, sell, lend, or rent any bicycle except as provided in this chapter.
- 1200.10 No motorized bicycle shall be operated upon any public space in the District by any person who is less than sixteen (16) years old.

1201 SAFE OPERATION OF BICYCLES, AND MOTORIZED BICYCLES

- 1201.1 Every person who propels a vehicle by human power or who rides a bicycle on a highway shall have the same duties as any other vehicle operator under this title, except as otherwise expressly provided in this chapter, and except for those duties imposed by this title which, by their nature or wording, can have no reasonable application to a bicycle operator.
- 1201.2 (a) A person operating a bicycle shall comply with subsection 2201.1 of this title requiring drivers to be on the right half of the roadway and shall not operate on the left facing traffic coming from the opposite direction except when authorized by that section.
- (b) Except as provided in paragraph (c) of this subsection and in subsection 2202.9 of this title, any person operating a bicycle upon a roadway at less than the normal speed of traffic at the time and place and under the conditions then existing shall travel as closely as practicable to the right-hand curb or edge of the roadway, or as closely as practicable to the left-hand curb or edge of the roadway when on a one-way street.
- (c) Any person operating a bicycle may move away from the positions described in subsection (b) as necessary under any of the following situations:
- (1) When overtaking and passing another bicycle or other vehicle proceeding in the same direction;
 - (2) When preparing for a turn;
 - (3) When reasonably necessary to avoid conditions including, but not limited to, fixed or moving objects, parking or moving vehicles, vehicle doors that are or may open, bicycles, pedestrians, animals, surface hazards, or substandard width lanes that make it unsafe to remain near the curb or edge of the roadway. For purposes of this section, a "a substandard width "lane" means a lane or other area on the roadway that is too narrow for a bicycle and an overtaking vehicle to travel safely side by side within the lane. Any lane that is eleven 11 feet wide or less shall be presumed be a substandard width lane for purposes of this subsection;
 - (4) When necessary to comply with lane use restrictions; or
 - (5) When necessary for the bicyclist's safety.
- 1201.3 (a) A person operating a bicycle may overtake and pass another vehicle only under conditions which permit the movement to be made with safety.
- (b) A person operating a bicycle may overtake and pass other vehicles on the left or right side, staying in the same lane as the overtaken vehicle, or changing to a different lane, or riding off the roadway, as necessary to pass with safety.

(c) If a lane is partially occupied by vehicles that are stopped, standing, or parked in that lane, a person operating a bicycle may ride in that or in the next adjacent lane used by vehicles proceeding in the same direction.

- 1201.4 No person shall operate or ride a bicycle other than upon or astride a regular seat attached to the bicycle.
- 1201.5 No person shall operate or ride on a bicycle with more persons on it at any one time than the bicycle is equipped to carry.
- 1201.6 No person shall operate or ride a bicycle while carrying any package, bundle, or article which prevents the operator from keeping at least one hand on the handle bars.
- 1201.7 Persons riding upon a roadway shall not ride more than two abreast except on paths or part of roadways set aside for the exclusive use of bicycles. Persons riding two abreast shall not impede the normal and reasonable movement of traffic and, on a laned roadway, shall ride within a single lane.
- 1201.8 No person shall operate a bicycle at a speed in excess of any posted limit or at a speed which is greater than is reasonable and prudent under the conditions then existing.
- 1201.9 There shall be no prohibition against any person riding a bicycle upon a sidewalk within the District, so long as the rider does not create a hazard; Provided, that no person shall ride a bicycle upon a sidewalk within the Central Business District except on those sidewalks expressly designated by Order of the Mayor, nor shall any person ride a bicycle upon a sidewalk in any area outside of the Central Business District if it is expressly prohibited by Order of the Mayor and appropriate signs to such effect are posted.
- 1201.10 Any person riding a bicycle upon a sidewalk shall yield the right-of-way to pedestrians, and shall travel at a speed no greater than the posted speed limit of the adjacent roadway; Provided, that such speed is safe for the conditions then existing on the sidewalk.
- 1201.11 A person propelling a bicycle upon and along a sidewalk or while crossing a roadway in a crosswalk shall have all the rights and duties applicable to a pedestrian under the same circumstances, except that the bicyclist must yield to pedestrians on the sidewalk or crosswalk.
- 1201.12 The operator of a bicycle emerging from, or entering an alley, driveway, or building, shall, upon approaching a sidewalk or the sidewalk area extending across any alleyway, yield the right-of-way to all pedestrians approaching on said sidewalk area, and upon entering the roadway shall yield the right-of-way to all vehicles approaching on said roadway, to the extent necessary to safely enter the flow of traffic.
- 1201.13 No bicyclist shall suddenly leave a sidewalk and ride into the path of a vehicle which is so close that it is impossible for the driver to yield.
- 1201.14 No person operating a bicycle shall sound any warning device at any intersection so as to interfere with the obedience to the instructions of official traffic control signals or to the directions of police traffic control officers.

- 1201.15 No person shall operate a bicycle except in obedience to the instructions of official traffic control signals, signs, and other control devices applicable to vehicles, unless otherwise directed by a police officer or other person authorized to direct and control traffic.
- 1201.16 No person riding upon a bicycle shall attach himself or herself or the device upon which he or she is riding to any vehicle upon a highway, roadway, or in an alley.
- 1201.17 All provisions of this section shall be equally applicable to the operation and riding of motorized bicycles, except as specifically provided in this chapter; provided, that nothing in this chapter shall be construed as to limit the applicability of Chapters 1, 4, 5, 6, and 7 with respect to the licensing, registration, inspection, or equipment of motorized bicycles or motorcycles.
- 1201.18 Except as otherwise permitted for a motor vehicle, no person shall operate a motorized bicycle on any sidewalk or any off-street bikepath or bicycle route within the District. This prohibition shall apply even though the motorized bicycle is being operated solely by human power.
- 1201.19 A motorized bicycle may be operated on any part of a roadway designated for the use of bicycles

1202 MANDATORY REGISTRATION OF BICYCLES

- 1202.1 No person shall operate a bicycle in the District unless the bicycle has been validly registered as provided by this chapter and bears a serial number, a valid registration tag, and valid registration plate, as provided by this chapter; or unless it is validly registered in another jurisdiction, when required by applicable law of such jurisdiction, and bears readily visible evidence of being registered.
- 1202.2 Subsection 1202.1 shall not apply to the operation of a bicycle within fourteen (14) days of its acquisition by its owner; Provided, that the operator of the bicycle possesses written proof of the ownership and date of acquisition of the bicycle.
- 1202.3 Subsection 1202.1 shall not apply to the operation of a bicycle within fourteen (14) days of its being brought into the District except when being operated as a means of transportation from a place of employment on a route which requires the operation of the bicycle both outside and within the District of Columbia.
- 1202.4 Each bicycle registration under this chapter shall expire upon the destruction, sale, or transfer of the registered bicycle and the original owner thereof shall give notice to the Mayor.
- 1202.5 The registration of a bicycle may be renewed upon application of the subsequent owner.
- 1202.6 It shall be a violation of this chapter for any person to operate a bicycle registered under the provisions of this chapter without both a registration tag and a metal registration plate.

- 1202.7 No person who is not an owner or authorized agent of an owner shall present a bicycle for registration; Provided, that a person under eighteen (18) years of age may register a bicycle even though it is technically "owned" by his parent or guardian.
- 1202.8 No person shall, for the purpose of securing or attempting to secure registration of a bicycle, provide or furnish false or misleading information concerning the bicycle or concerning the ownership of the bicycle.
- 1202.9 No person shall transfer, remove, deface, or mutilate any valid serial number, valid registration tag, or valid registration plate; or change or alter any valid bicycle registration card.

1203 BICYCLE REGISTRATION PROCEDURES

- 1203.1 Any person wishing to register a bicycle shall file an application for registration with the Director.
- 1203.2 Each application for a registration certificate shall be executed by the owner of the bicycle upon a form furnished by the Director and shall contain the following:
- (a) The owner's true and lawful given name, middle name or names, if any, and surname, and his residence address;
 - (b) A description of the bicycle, including make, color, type, and whether new or used; and
 - (c) The date of acquisition by applicant, and the name and address of the person from whom the bicycle was acquired.
- 1203.3 Each application for registration of a new bicycle shall be accompanied by such proof of ownership as the Director may reasonably require.
- 1203.4 Each application for registration of a bicycle previously registered in the District shall be accompanied by the registration certificate of the previous owner or such other proof of ownership as the Director may reasonably require.
- 1203.5 Each application for registration of a used bicycle not previously registered in the District shall be accompanied by such proof of ownership as the Director may reasonably require.
- 1203.6 An application for renewal of a registration may be made during the thirty (30) day period immediately preceding the date of expiration of a registration.
- 1203.7 One dollar (\$1.00) shall be charged, upon filing of the application, to cover the cost of registration.
- 1203.8 When the Director is satisfied that a bicycle offered for registration is capable of being operated safely in accordance with §1204, the Director shall do the following:
- (a) Affix a serial number on the underside of the hanger of a frame bicycle, or otherwise record a description of the bicycle if to affix a number would damage the hanger;

(b) Affix a registration tag for the current bicycle period in a position which renders the tag readily visible;

(c) Affix a registration plate for the current bicycle registration period to the back frame of the bicycle between the seat and the back wheel; and

(d) Issue to the owner a registration card bearing the name and address of the owner; the serial, tag, and plate numbers; a brief description of the bicycle; and such other information as the Director deems necessary.

1203.9 If a registration certificate is lost, stolen, destroyed, mutilated, or illegally detained from the owner; or in case the registrant desires another registration certificate for any reason satisfactory to the Director; the Director shall prepare a duplicate registration certificate upon receipt of an application for the duplicate certificate.

1203.10 Application for a duplicate registration certificate shall be made on a form furnished by the Director.

1204 BICYCLE SAFETY EQUIPMENT

1204.1 Each bicycle shall be equipped with a brake which will enable the operator to make the braked wheels skid on dry, level, clean pavement.

1204.2 Each bicycle, when in use at night, shall be equipped with a lamp on the front which shall emit a white light visible from a distance of at least five hundred feet (500 ft.) to the front and with a red reflector on the rear of a type approved by the Director which shall be visible from all distances from fifty feet (50 ft.) to three hundred feet (300 ft.) to the rear when directly in front of upper beams of head lamps on a motor vehicle.

1204.3 A lamp emitting a red light visible from a distance of five hundred feet (500 ft.) to the rear may be used in lieu of the red reflector.

1204.4 In place of the requirements of §1204.2, a lamp may be worn on the arm or leg of an operator; Provided, that it may be readily seen from the distances set forth in that subsection.

1204.5 Each bicycle shall be equipped with a bell or other device capable of giving a signal audible for a distance of at least one hundred feet (100 ft.).

1204.6 A bicycle shall not be equipped with, nor shall any bicycle rider use, a siren of any kind.

1204.7 A bicycle rider shall not use the device for giving an audible signal when operating the bicycle within the quiet zone established by the provisions of D.C. Law 2-53 within one hundred (100) yards of any school, college, or university while classes are in session, or within one hundred (100) yards of any hospital or institution for the treatment of sick persons, except where such use is reasonably necessary for the safety of the rider or pedestrians.

1205 APPROVAL AND SALE OF BICYCLE SAFETY EQUIPMENT

- 1205.1 The Director is authorized to approve or disapprove lighting devices required by this chapter for use on a bicycle.
- 1205.2 The Director is required to approve or disapprove any lighting devices for which approval is specifically requested by a manufacturer.
- 1205.3 The Director, upon approving any lamp or device, shall issue to the applicant a letter of approval together with any instructions considered necessary.
- 1205.4 The Director shall publish lists of all approved lamps and devices by name and type, together with any other information deemed helpful to the public.
- 1205.5 No person shall have for sale, sell, or offer for sale for use upon or as part of the equipment of a bicycle or use upon any bicycle, any front or rear lamps or reflectors, or any other lamp(s), or parts of any of the foregoing which tend to change the original design or performance, unless of a type which has been approved by the Director.
- 1205.6 Approval may be revoked if at any time a device falls below the standard of quality upon which approval was based.
- 1205.7 Whenever the Director has reason to believe that an approved lighting device being sold commercially no longer complies with this chapter, he or she may, after giving thirty (30) days' previous notice to the person holding the letter of approval for the device in the District, conduct a hearing upon the question of compliance of the approved device.
- 1205.8 After the hearing, the Director shall determine whether the approved device continues to satisfy the requirements of this chapter.
- 1205.9 If the lighting device no longer complies with the requirements of this chapter, he or she shall so notify the person holding the letter of approval for the device, and revoke approval of the lighting device for use on bicycles in the District.

1206 TRANSPORTING BICYCLES

- 1206.1 A mountable rack may be attached to a vehicle for the purpose of transporting a bicycle; Provided, that the number of bicycles transported in the rack shall not exceed the number which the rack is designed to carry.
- 1206.2 No mountable rack shall extend beyond the bumper design margins of a vehicle in any manner which is hazardous or dangerous, nor shall any such mountable rack obstruct the vehicle's stop or turn signals.

1207 SALE AND RENTAL OF BICYCLES

- 1207.1 Every person engaged in the business of buying or selling bicycles shall inform a purchaser of the purpose and procedure for registration of bicycles.
- 1207.2 The Director shall include on the registration card of each duly registered bicycle provisions relating to the transfer of ownership.

- 1207.3 The purchaser of a bicycle which had previously been registered shall present that bicycle along with proof of ownership to the Mayor for re-registration in the name of the new owner.
- 1207.4 Every person who sells or transfers a new bicycle to any other person within the District shall, within four (4) business days after the sale or transfer, deliver to the transferee a certificate of sale properly describing and identifying the bicycle.
- 1207.5 Every person who sells or transfers a used bicycle to any other person within the District, for which a District bicycle registration is outstanding, shall within four (4) business days after the sale or disposal, deliver to the transferee evidence of ownership as provided for on the reverse side of the registration certificate.
- 1207.6 Any owner of a used bicycle may present his or her proof of ownership, along with the bicycle, to any District Police Station or Fire Station for the purpose of registration.
- 1207.7 No person engaged in the business of renting bicycles shall rent or offer to rent any bicycle that is not registered.
- 1207.8 Every person engaged in the business of renting bicycles shall issue to each person who rents a bicycle a statement of rental bearing the names and addresses of the lessor and lessee, the rate at which the bicycle is rented, the time for which it is rented, and the bicycle's registration tag and registration plate number.
- 1207.9 It shall be the duty of the owner, proprietor, or person in charge of any store or shop where bicycles, motor bicycles, tricycles, or similar vehicles are left for repair, to keep a written record of the number and make of each vehicle so left, together with the name and residence of the owner of the vehicle and the name and residence of the person leaving the vehicle at the store or shop.

1208 BICYCLE RACKS

- 1208.1 No bicycle rack shall be placed on public space unless a permit has been obtained from the Mayor.
- 1208.2 An application for a bicycle rack permit shall be signed by the owner of the abutting property and filed with the Mayor.
- 1208.3 No permit shall be issued for any rack which would unduly obstruct pedestrian movement.
- 1208.4 There shall be no fee for rental of public space for racks.
- 1208.5 Any rack placed on public space by the permittee shall be removable; shall be maintained in a good, clean condition; and shall not be allowed to deteriorate, become unsightly, or dangerous to the public.

1209 PARKING BICYCLES ON PUBLIC SPACE

- 1209.1 A person may secure a bicycle to a stanchion for a period of not more than twelve (12) consecutive hours, by means of a lock or similar device, in accordance with the requirements of §1209.2.

- 1209.2 A person may secure a bicycle to a stanchion by means of a lock or similar device as long as securing the bicycle does not obstruct or unduly impede traffic or pedestrian movement and as long as securing bicycles has not been forbidden by any notice posted by the Director.
- 1209.3 No person shall secure a bicycle to any of the following publicly-owned facilities:
- (a) Fire hydrants;
 - (b) Police and fire call boxes;
 - (c) Electric traffic signal poles;
 - (d) Stanchions or poles located within bus zones or stands;
 - (e) Stanchions or poles located within twenty-five feet (25 ft.) of an intersection;
 - (f) Trees under ten inches (10 in.) in diameter.
- 1209.4 There shall be no fee charged for use of parking meter stanchions used in accordance with these regulations; Provided, that the parking space adjacent to the meter is not occupied by the bicycle.
- 1209.5 The Director may remove any bicycle secured to a stanchion which is not in compliance with this section; Provided, that the bicycle is impounded in accordance with the provisions of this chapter.
- 1209.6 Except as provided in this chapter, no person may park a bicycle upon a highway other than the roadway against the curb; nor may any person park a bicycle upon a sidewalk, except in a rack to support the bicycle; or against a building or at the curb, in such manner as to afford the least obstruction to pedestrian traffic.
- 1209.7 All provisions of this section shall be equally applicable to the parking or securing of motorized bicycles.

1210 IMPOUNDING OF BICYCLES

- 1210.1 The Director may remove from public space and impound any bicycle which is in violation of this chapter, or which is being operated in violation of this chapter.
- 1210.2 In not more than seventy-two (72) hours after impounding, the Director shall notify the owner of a registered bicycle that it has been impounded, and for what reasons, and shall specify what actions are necessary for the owner to regain possession; Provided, that this notification shall not be necessary if the owner was present at the time of impounding, and was informed of the actions necessary to regain possession.
- 1210.3 A bicycle impounded for any violation of this chapter shall be returned upon the posting of an appropriate bond or collateral.
- 1210.4 If an impounded bicycle is not claimed within thirty (30) days of impounding, the Director may, at his discretion, either auction off the bicycle to the highest bidder or give the bicycle free-of-charge to minors as part of a bicycle recreation, safety, and responsibility program.

1211 OPERATION OF MISCELLANEOUS VEHICLES

- 1211.1 No person upon rollerskates, skateboard, or riding by means of a sled, coaster, toy vehicle, sidewalk bicycle, or similar device shall go upon any roadway except when crossing a roadway in a crosswalk. When crossing a roadway, such person shall be granted all the rights and shall be subject to all the duties applicable to pedestrians. This subsection shall not apply to any street set aside as a play street by the Mayor or the Council.
- 1211.2 No person riding upon a coaster, rollerskates, skateboard, sled, toy vehicle, sidewalk bicycle, or any similar device shall attach himself or herself or the device upon which he or she is riding to any vehicle upon a highway, roadway, or in an alley.
- 1211.3 No person shall ride or use skateboards, rollerskates, rollerblades, or similar devices upon the parks and plazas located in the Pennsylvania Avenue Development area, as defined by the Pennsylvania Avenue Development Corporation Act of 1972, approved October 27, 1972 (86 Stat. 1266; 40 U.S.C. §871(f)).
- 1211.4 The Pennsylvania Avenue Development Corporation shall post public notice at a park or plaza prior to enforcement of §§1211.3 through 1211.10.
- 1211.5 The public notice shall include the following or similar language and signage:
"Riding or use of skateboards, rollerskates, rollerblades, or similar devices is strictly prohibited. Skateboards subject to removal and impoundment. Civil fine for violating this law shall be fifty dollars (\$50)."
- 1211.6 The public notice shall be placed at a minimum of two (2) locations adjacent to entrances to the park or plaza; shall measure at least two feet by one foot (2 ft. by 1 ft.); and shall be in capital letters.
- 1211.7 All violations of §1211.3 shall be processed and adjudicated in accordance with the provisions of chapter 10 of this title.
- 1211.8 A police officer may remove and impound any skateboard being used in violations of §1211.3.
- 1211.9 Any skateboard impounded for violation of §1211.3 shall be returned to its owner upon the posting of bond or collateral in the amount of fifty dollars (\$50).
- 1211.10 If the owner or user of the skateboard is a juvenile under the age of sixteen (16) years, any skateboard impounded for violation of §1211.3 shall be returned to the owner's or user's parents or legal guardian upon the posting of bond or collateral in the amount of fifty dollars (\$50).
- 1211.11 The civil fine for violation of §1211.3 shall be fifty dollars (\$50).

TITLE 11. ZONING
CHAPTER 21. OFF-STREET PARKING REQUIREMENTS

2119 BICYCLE PARKING SPACES

- 2119.1 Bicycle parking spaces shall be provided for office, retail and service uses, except for retail and service uses in the C-3-C, C-4, and C-5 (PAD) districts. For office uses in the C-4 and C-5 (PAD) districts, bicycle parking spaces shall be provided as if the building or structure were located in a C-3-C district.
- 2119.2 The number of bicycle parking spaces provided shall be at least equal to five percent (5%) of the number of automobile parking spaces required under §2101.1.
- 2119.3 Bicycle facilities shall have convenient access from the building or structure and street or other bicycle right-of-way, be clean, secure and well lit and shall be located within a building or structure, either on the ground floor, basement, or first cellar level.
- 2119.4 All bicycle parking spaces required under §2119.1 shall be a minimum of two feet (2') in width and six feet (6') in length.
- 2119.5 An aisle five feet (5') in width shall be provided between rows of bicycle parking spaces and the perimeter of the area devoted to bicycle parking.
- 2119.6 If a room or common locker not divided into individual spaces is used to meet these requirements, twelve square feet of floor area shall be considered the equivalent of one (1) bicycle parking space. Where manufactured metal lockers or racks are provided, each locker or stall devoted to bicycle parking shall be counted as one bicycle parking space.
- 2119.7 [DELETED]
- 2119.8 Signs shall be posted stating where bicycle parking spaces are located in each building or structure where bicycle parking spaces are required. The signs shall be located in a prominent place at each entrance to the building or structure. The sign shall have a white background, with black lettering which is no more than two inches (2") in height.
- 2119.9 For a building or structure existing on March 1, 1985, one percent (1%) of the amount of required parking spaces may be converted to bicycle parking spaces of appropriate size.